

PERSONALIZED PRESCRIPTION DRUG COMPLIANCE KIT

Description

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0001] Prescription drugs dispensed at pharmacies, hospitals, clinics, doctor offices, or other locations are typically handed out to patients as samples and/or as labeled prescriptions. While many systems have been proposed for dispensing prescription drugs samples, none have fully addressed the need for personalization in such distribution. Specifically, known systems do not offer a way for samples to be personalized with doctor and/or patient information, nor do they address the need for certain types of patients to carry both prescription medication and emergency information on their person in a convenient manner once a prescription has been filled.

[0002] According to the present invention, a personalized prescription drug package is described which provides a practical prescription drug container for use with both samples and ongoing stores of prescription medication. Prior to filling a prescription that a patient has received, it is common that a doctor's office will provide the patient with a sample supply of the prescription drug. However, such samples are doled out in inconvenient bottles, or blister packs that are not convenient for day-to-day carrying by mobile patients. In current practice, doctor offices will offer a patient a small bottle or packet of a prescription drug to be prescribed to them from supplies delivered from a pharmaceutical sales representative. Such samples do not have the prescribing doctor's name on the packaging, and are often inconvenient for travel with a patient or for those patients who carry medications on their person. Moreover, once a prescription is filled, the same (but often larger) containers are used for storing the prescription drugs. Particularly for those patients who are on the move, or for those who, for medical reasons, need to carry the drug on their person at all times, such bottles or blister packs are inconvenient. Comprehensive

information is not thereafter carried on the person of a patient in the course of using such medications. Although physician emergency contact information is often provided on a prescription bottle as known in the art, many patients do not carry such a bottle with them throughout the day, or in cases where a patient actually chooses to carry an aftermarket container (such as a pill box) for convenient carry of a prescription medication, there is no attendant labeling of either the contents or pertinent emergency information on the aftermarket pill box. This can be problematic for the many patients who need to rely on medication throughout different times of a given day, and have to carry the pills on their person each day. By way of one example, this can be difficult for a patient when he finds that he needs ready access to a physician for emergency questions that have arisen. Or in more severe cases, certain patients, such as those with severe heart conditions, seizures, hemophilia, etc., can become incapacitated, and quick access to comprehensive emergency information is needed. Even where a medical bracelet is worn, EMT personnel or other rescuers simply do not have access to a full panoply of information that might be useful in emergency cases. However, with the inventive device, rescuers can search a victim's pockets for such a pill case in order to access personalized emergency information that may be affixed to the pillbox.

[0003] Therefore, according to one aspect of the present invention a method and apparatus of dispensing prescription samples is provided such that samples can be tailored to bear personalized information, such as the prescribing doctor's name and emergency contact information. Rather than handing out inconvenient containers of samples, a doctor's office can instead hand out samples that not only bear pertinent, personalized information that is not provided by present sample packaging, but also includes a dispensing module in the form of a convenient, carryable pill box for reuse with the drugs procured when the prescription is filled thereafter. Unlike after-market pill boxes, the personalized box distributed with a sample does not rely on the ambitions of a patient in going out and buying a more convenient carry case for his prescription, and in any case, does not leave

patients who desire to use a carryable pill box, unprotected in case of an emergency where information such as contact names and numbers, or other vital information is needed.

[0004] Accordingly, the present invention provides distinct advantages both over the prior art means of providing non-personalized drug sample packets, as well as over the prior art mean of providing convenient, personalized descriptions on convenient containers for use with filled prescriptions

[0005] Hence, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide for the personalized dispensing of prescription drug samples, and the means for safe and convenient carrying by patients therefor. This and other objects of the invention will become clear from an inspection of the detailed description of the invention and from the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an exemplary embodiment according to the present invention;

[0007] FIG. 2 is a top plan view of a preferred embodiment printed and configured according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS AND PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0008] FIG. 1 is an offset illustration of an exemplary personalized prescription drug compliance kit 1 that may be manufactured according to the method of the present invention. Various structures of the present invention may be alternatively envisioned as determined by the dosage specifics of the prescription drug, and/or the patient needs.

[0009] Personalized prescription drug compliance kit 1 may, in a preferred embodiment, comprise informational backing portion 2, which may be printed with desired prescription drug information, the proper dosage, various cautions regarding Federal law, storage instructions, as well as the manufacturer's distributor's name or logo, etc. printed at 5, and will further include attached portable pill box 3. In one preferred embodiment, portable pill box 3 will be affixed to informational backing portion 2 by a rubberized glue that will allow for the portable pill box to be detached from the informational backing portion 2 with minimal hassle by a patient. Ideally, informational backing portion 2 will be formed from a substantially stiff paper based card material for ease of handling and printing thereon as desired by a pharmaceutical manufacturer or distributor. Ideally, all forming and printing of the personalized prescription drug compliance kit 1 will be done by a pharmaceutical manufacturer/distributor or the appointed kit provider, either of which will form and print different kits with different printed information according to the specific prescription drug targeted to be included as a sample 4, as well as the prescribing doctor information where pharmaceutical sales representatives choose to designate a given lot of personalized drug compliance kits for a certain physician or practice.

[0010] Such printing and forming may be accomplished as known in the art of printing informational material on cards, or as known in the art of packaging pharmaceuticals, such as that described in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,014,851, 4,790,118, 4,534,468, and 5,752,723, each of which is hereby incorporated by reference. Optionally provided for might be an affinity or type of compliance card 8 for repeat patients that may be affixed with rubberized glue for detachment by patients who wish to utilize such a card in the future. By way of one embodiment, as depicted in Figure 2, personalized prescription drug compliance kit 1 might have an overall dimensions of: a length of 10.75 inches, a width of 4.06 inches, and have a fold or crease formed at 6.50 inches from one end so that the kit may be displayed upright by folding at the crease. Additional specifics might be desired such as forming perforations or zippers at various locations, or the forming of a patient

education cavity 11, and/or a pill box cavity 12, and/or a drug sample cavity 13 for insertion respectively of, patient education material (not depicted), portable pill box (not depicted), and/or (a) drug sample(s) (not depicted).

[0011] In an especially preferred embodiment, personalized prescription drug compliance kit 1 is provided with a personalized information identifier 7 affixed to the portable pill box 3. The personalized information detailer may contain one or all of a variety of the following emergency information indicia such as: the prescribing doctor's name and emergency contact information (cell phone, paging service, address, etc.), drug dosage, interaction information, and in the case of patient personalization that may be provided on site at the doctor's office, the patient's name and emergency condition information (e.g., sever heart angina, hemophilia, blood type, etc.), patient's next of kin/emergency contact information, and the like.

[0012] In order to ensure compliance with regards to the regular taking of prescribed medications, the preferred dimensions of the portable pill box 3 that is affixed to the informational backing portion 2 is of such a size as to encourage patients to carry the pill box around as needed. Consequently, the portable pill box 3, in one embodiment, may be slim enough in profile (say, approximately 1/2 inch deep, 2 inches wide, 3 inches in length) so as to be able fit into a pants or breast pocket, much like a thin wallet might be carried. The internal compartments 9 within a portable pill box 3 may also be configured as needed depending on the specific prescription drug that will be attached as a sample 4. This might include changing the number of compartments or sizes thereof, as well as configuring each compartment 9 with some numbering so as to reflect a certain number of days in a cycle of the given prescription.

[0013] It will thus be seen that according to the present invention a method of dispensing prescription drug samples has been provided which is highly advantageous, in terms of portability and in terms of provision of emergency information for ease of access by

patients and/or rescuers. While the invention has been herein shown and described in what is presently conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiment thereof it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that many modifications may be made thereof within the scope of the invention, which scope is to be accorded the broadest interpretation of the appended claims so as to encompass all equivalent methods and structures.